

Spot Checking

Food ★ Fun ★ Frolic
By Bill Whitman

Politics at the Grotto

No one can say that Millie Riera isn't politically minded. Not when you think about the present salute to the site of the Republican convention at the Seafood Grotto in Redondo Beach.

Now whether or not this gives you an inside tip as to Millie's political thinking remains to be seen but she's now through Aug. 10 called presenting a special offering the Miami Beach Seafood Platter. And you can be sure, if it's a seafood dish and is presented at the Seafood Grotto, it's one of the best offerings you can get anywhere around. It rates up there around the top.

For four and a quarter you get such favorites of the gulfstream as oysters, crab legs, fillet of sole, and scallops, and the whole thing will include soup or salad as well as other little goodies.

Up the coast a ways where Alex Shustin runs his delightful Santa Barbara Inn (in the town of the same name) they're holding a "La Fiesta" type thing from Aug. 7 through 11.

Alex urges you to make reservation at The Inn for either dining or sleeping (or both) as things are apt to be somewhat chaotic during La Fiesta and seating may be difficult.

Should you desire rooms at the Santa Barbara Inn (and they're lovely) it might be a wise move to 'phone area code 805-966-2285 and get your space properly wired for accommodations. You might even go in for the concatenation bit and bring a group.

Hey, we haven't done the Vegas routine for a while so let's give it a whirl this week.

Like for example the happening in the Blue Room of the Hotel Tropiciana beginning this Friday night. It's the Count himself with his world famous ork who bows in for a three-week stand.

Opening along with Basie will be the sultry singer of songs Angeline Butler and big comic Billy Wallace.

This may be considered quite a departure for Mr. B, what with the heavy demands put on him for TV appearance, as well as motion picture commitments, but Basie's the kind of cat who loves to see his audience and likes to keep his music "moving" which he surely does. Remember, Count Basie came up in the jazz era and musicians played primarily for dancers and it's still toe-tapping time when Basie hits the stand.

Not only has he consistently topped several American polls such as Downbeat and International Critics, he's also scored the top spot in the French monthly Le Jazz Hot, and whether it be French, English or Polish, jazz is still jazz and Basie is still Basie.

And speaking of "happenings" that was quite a rush The Tropiciana had to handle recently when some 200 hopefuls descended on entertainment director Maynard Sloate and ballet master Vassili Sulich in the Theater Restaurant in answer to a call for dancers and showgirls for the Folies Bergere. How many made it? TWO! That's how many!

But co-producers Sloate and Michel Gyarmathy plan an extensive search for the "most beautiful girls in the world" to appear in the upcoming December premier of the Folies Bergere. Hm-m-m, now let's see—these legs are a bit knobby and the measurements run something like 42-38-42—nope, don't think we quite come up to the Folies standards. And come to think of it—we're the wrong sex!

But anyway, girls, look your prettiest 'cause these two guys are sticklers for just the right things and in just the right places.

Then down the strip a piece at The Riviera it's Merv Griffin and his gang for a couple more weeks including veteran actor Arthur Treacher, singing star Gloria Loring and comic Marty Brill while Mort Lindsey will conduct. All this happens in the Versailles Room.

Me a while, concurrently over in the Riviera's Starlite Theatre is Shecky Greene and Earl Wilson Jr. who opened under some w/h at shaky circumstances—his Dad, Earl Wilson Sr., was in the opening nite audience along with "The B.W."

All is not complete happiness, however, at The Riviera what with the passing of long-time hotel man Jess Goodman the latter part of July.

Mr. Goodman, who started in the hotel business as a bellman in Los Angeles and worked his way up "the hard way" to president of the plush Riviera Hotel, succumbed to a heart attack at his home early Sunday morning, July 21, at the age of 50.

The current policy of "courtesy and service" enjoyed by the many guests that visit The Riviera was chiefly attributed to Jess Goodman who opened the doors of The Riviera in an executive capacity in April, 1955, and watched it grow from a 250-room structure to an elegant 770-room high-rise. He was born in Galena, Kan.

So anyway, keep in mind when you visit the posh Riviera that most of the beautiful service you receive is probably due in part to the efforts of Jess Goodman... a good man!

And a pow-wow it is, too, when you "gather around the teepee" at Smith Bros. Indian Village Restaurant, 4020 Pacific Coast Highway in Torrance.

It's a swinger every day Monday through Friday starting at four in the afternoon in the Firewater Lounge when you receive

double-size libations from then 'til 6 p.m.

Then to add to this gala, Big Chief Bill Bailey will be presiding at the "tom-toms" and organ for your entertainment 'til 8 in the evening, according to head maiden, Virginia Haack.

How! Come join 'em all the squaws, squawettes, and braves for heap big pow-wow at the Indian Village.

Don't forget, now, about the Seventh Anniversary Party coming off this Sunday at Shipwreck Joey's when Carl Cody'll be swingin' out with his Western Swing Band 'til far into the nite.

Carl'll become a regular fixture down there at Figueroa and "B" St. in Wilmington, too. In fact, he's already become a permanent fixture there (by the time you read this) appearing every Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nites.

And according to hostess Ruth, and co-hosts Ike and Joey, there'll be no cover charge and reservations are urged. Call 835-4900 and make 'em!

The Joon Choi Trio are still puttin' 'em away over at Rose and Louis Song's delightful Tea House Restaurant and Cocktail Lounge. One of the finest groups in the Southland.

Complimenting the entertainment are the exciting, exotic cocktails whipped up by head barman Ronnie in the intimate little cocktail bar at the rear with ample parking just outside the back door. Or, if you wish, there's lots out front, too.

You may lunch for as little as \$1.25 and dine for the small sum of \$2... and up. The Tea House opens daily at 11:30 for your convenience.

Then if you're planning any kind of a party or meeting in the near or distant future there are huge banquet facilities available.

Oh yeah! Wait a minute! Don't forget "the happening" down there this coming Monday nite (and hopefully every Monday—if it goes over!).

Ronnie 'phoned last Monday afternoon and says he's calling it "The Swing Thing" and right there in that name alone it has some great possibilities.

There's to be people from all over L.A., from both the musical world as well as just John and Jane Doe... The Jet Set—The Mini Set—The Micro Set—and then you're ALL set!

The entire evening will be highlighted by the appearance of many guest groups sitting in to bring you some of the finest sounds in the Southland. Actually, what it'll all boil down to is probably a real good old jam session. So let's make the scene Monday nite. Festivities will begin around 9 in the evening. Why not plan on having a leisurely dinner at The Tea House and then hang around for the big noise!



THREE OF A KIND... And that's a good hand in any poker game, but it's even better when they come like The Chuck Rowan Trio, shown above, appearing nightly at The Zebra Room on Hawthorne Boulevard in Torrance. Swingers all!

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This space contributed to USO by this paper

Curtain Going Up

CHAPEL THEATRE—"Curse You, Jack Dalton," by Wilbur Braun, directed by Jim Vogl. Fridays and Saturdays, 8:30 p.m., Sundays, 8 p.m. Aug. 16 through Sept. 14. 2222 Lomita Blvd. 373-3636

SHOWCASE THEATRE—"Stop the World, I Want to Get Off," musical comedy directed by Roland Petell. Fridays and Saturdays, 8:30 p.m., through Aug. 17. 13752 S. Prairie Ave. 672-5429.

LONG BEACH COMMUNITY PLAYERS—"The Happiest Millionaire," comedy by Kyle Crichton, directed by Bertrand Tanswell, Thursdays, 7:45 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays, 8:30 p.m. Aug. 2 through Sept. 7. 5021 E. Anaheim St, Long Beach, 438-0536

KENTWOOD PLAYERS—"The Odd Couple," comedy by Neil Simon, directed by Paul Kaufman. Fridays and Saturdays, 8:30 p.m., Sundays, 8 p.m., through Aug. 17. 8301 S. Hindry Ave., Westchester, 645-5156.

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